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PHIL. HAFNER'S STUMP SPEECH TO THE BEANVILLE NATIVES.

(Continued from last week.)

During the week there was a general discussion of Phil Hafner's speech in the Beanville settlement, and many got out their bibles to see if the verse quoted was really there. Then they asked the parson about it, and he explained it by saying that conditions were different then—just as if conditions could change the intent of the Word of God.

On the appointed evening the school house was filled to its utmost capacity. The discussion of the week had aroused much interest and everybody was eager to hear what the speaker would say next. The politicians also got "wind" of the excitement and sent a "spotter" down to report the proceedings. About 7 o'clock the speaker arrived, and, without any preliminaries, stepped to the teacher's desk and began:

"Ladies and gentlemen: This is—"

"Hold on there, Mr. Speaker," interrupted Farmer Jones. "I want to ask a question."

"All right, sir; I am here to answer questions. What is it?"

"Well, I have a son with a good head on him, and I've been thinkin' of makin' a lawyer out of him. I want to know what you think about it?"

"I think you had better think again."

"Why so; don't lawyers make an easy livin' and git up in the world?"

"That depends entirely on what you consider making an easy living and getting up in the world. Under existing conditions the lawyer is very important. He has made your laws and so framed them that the lawyer is indispensable."

"Well, then, if the lawyer is indispensable, why wouldn't it be a good thing to make a lawyer of Johnnie?"

"Perhaps it would. If you are only considering his future from a commercial standpoint, then I know of no higher priced article on the market than a good lawyer."

"Then why do you advise me to think again?"

"For the reason that I had hoped that you had a higher ideal for your child than the mere making of money."

"So I have. And I thought by making a lawyer of him he could climb the ladder of fame."

"Under existing conditions it is barely possible for an honest man to climb the ladder of fame, and I presume you intend for your son to remain honest."

"That's what I do, and if he can't go as straight as a shingle I don't want him to go at all."

"Then you had better keep your boy at home. There are some men in the legal profession today who may be considered honorable, but the average lawyer is a gold brick."

"How so?"

"Well, the average lawyer thrives only on strife and discontent. His business is best when others are at war. He is in the open market and his opinions are for sale. It is a very important part of his business to gain the confidence of the people of the community in which he resides, and the price he charges for his services depends largely on the influence he wields over the people. He will defend anything—no matter whether right or wrong—for a stated sum of money, and yet hold the respect of the people. If a newspaper or an ordinary individual did this, the community would find fault."

"I see the point," acknowledged Farmer Jones, and feeling that no further questions would be asked, Mr. Hafner continued his address:

"My friends, do you know that under just conditions—under conditions that will allow a man to enjoy the full reward of his own labor—a man can support his family in luxury if he works only six hours a day? Do you believe that it was intended that the many should work ten and fifteen hours a day in order to get only a miserable existence? No. It is intended by our Creator that man shall have some happiness, some time to devote to his family, some time to worship Him who created all things, and some time to develop the mind as well as the body."

"You never listened to a politician in your life that did not produce and talk about patriotism. But his statistics are usually made to order and to suit the politician's point he is trying to impress upon you. But, so far as I know, there is one statistician they never refer to. Mr. Lawrence Graham says that the statistics of the year 1902 showed that the average citizen of this country was worth \$1,000 less than he was in 1901."

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In other words, a man creates ten dollars' worth of wealth and is permitted to enjoy only one-eighth of it. Who gets the remaining seven-eighths? The answer is easy. It goes to the favored few, who have their hired lobbyists in our legislative halls to so frame our laws that the many are robbed for the benefit of the few. If it is true, as Mr. Graham asserts—and I believe it is—that the average wealth produced by the average laborer is ten dollars per day, don't you think that if you were permitted to enjoy all you produced you could get along very well by working only six hours a day?

"At one time—and not so long ago—I was as bitter a partisan as you will find anywhere. I looked upon the St. Louis Republic as the exponent of the true faith and I looked upon Democratic politicians as the only saviors of mankind. I believed that everything that bore the Democratic label was pure and righteous, and that everything bearing the label of Republicanism was rotten and corrupt. For a long time I refused to read Republican newspapers or listen to Republican orators. I had taught myself to believe that they were inspired by the devil. So strong were my political prejudices that I had little confidence in the intelligence or sincerity of a man who voted any other than the Democratic ticket, and when we elected Cleveland I felt that all was well. But it wasn't. Conditions became worse than even, and it was during his administration that my eyes began to open, and occasionally I condescended to read Republican newspapers and listen to Republican spellbinders. I soon found that the Republicans were capable of saying just as bad things against the Democrats as the Democrats were capable of saying against the Republicans. I found that each appealed to the prejudices of the people and not to their intelligence. Each accused the other of being the agents of capital. Each accused the other of being dishonest and corrupt. Strange to say, after carefully watching affairs, I was convinced that each told the truth."

"So far as the rank and file of either party is concerned, it is honest. A Republican farmer or laborer or mechanic does not want a bad government, or a government by trusts, any more than does the Democratic farmer, laborer or mechanic. Both are honest in their efforts to secure the best results possible, and are kept firm in the faith by listening to politicians and reading partisan newspapers of their particular faith. They do not seem to realize that the politician is either after a fat job, or is spouting off at so much per spout, and that the metropolitan newspapers are owned by capitalists who know no politics and usually support the men who will best serve their interests. What would have been the verdict of the Missouri Democracy in the Fall of 1900 had they known that the Jefferson Club of St. Louis would put a Republican at the head of the so-called Democratic ticket in that city, and that this ticket would receive the endorsement of the state administration? Do you think the Neabit

law would have saved Gov. Dockery and his associates? But the Neabit law succeeded in landing Rolla Wells, a Republican, in the mayor's office, and the Democratic administration at Jefferson City applauded!

"In their platform, in their newspapers, and through their speakers, the Republicans denounce the trusts and great combinations of wealth as dangerous to the welfare of the country, and yet every member of President Roosevelt's cabinet is a direct representative of the capitalistic interests. With such men at the head of our government how can it be expected that the few laws we have governing trusts and corporations will be enforced, or that needy ones will be enacted."

"In their platform of 1900 the Democratic leaders of Missouri viciously denounced the corrupting influences of trusts and corporations and then proved their sincerity by selecting as one of their delegates at large to the national convention the representative of the Missouri Pacific railroad. They selected Bill Phelps, the man who has done more to obstruct needed legislation than any other man in Missouri. His chief qualification consisted in his ability to furnish railroad passes to the 'influential.' In the governor's chair at Jefferson City sits a man who is a banker and a capitalist. During the four years prior to his occupancy the chair was occupied by a man who was also a banker and a capitalist. Is it any wonder that the cry of the people for lower interest and lower railroad rates remains unheeded? But what are you going to do about it? Politicians tell us to 'stick to the party.' So far as I am concerned, I have stuck until the glue has all worn off. I can stick no longer. Hereafter I shall vote for men and measures that, in my opinion, will be best for all mankind, whether they bear a party label or not."

Here the speaker paused and announced that he would answer any questions the listeners might ask. In an instant Farmer Brown was on his feet and announced that he wanted to know something.

"All right; what is it?"

"Well, last week you said something about the land belonging to all the people. Yesterday I was up at Benton and asked the lawyers about it, and they just hooted at the idea and said you was an anarchist."

"I am not surprised at that. Perhaps the lawyers to whom you talked have represented you in the legislative halls and are, in part, responsible for the existing condition of things. It is true that we have the same land laws here that they have in the British Empire, and it will only be a matter of a very short time until tenantry and the rack-rent system will be as general here as it is in Ireland, but that does not destroy the fact that the primary title to land is in the whole people."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Well, the next time your lawyer hoots at the idea of the land belonging to all the people, you just tell him to refuse to pay the taxes that the law now requires him to pay as a tribute for the privilege of holding his land, and see how quick the whole people—the state—will relieve him of

his title and sell it to someone who is willing to pay the tribute."

Farmer Brown shook his head as he muttered: "That's so; the tax-collector do sell a feller's land when he don't pay the tax on it. I had mine advertised last year, but I choked it off by borrowin' the money and payin' the taxes and the costs."

"As a further proof that the people still hold primary title to the land is the fact that when it is considered for the public good any land can be condemned for public use," continued the speaker. "Your county court can condemn a roadway through any land in your county, and no matter how much the man in possession of the land may complain, the road will go through if the public welfare demands it. It is because a railway is considered a public carrier and a public highway that it can condemn your land and even your buildings for its right of way. The fundamental law of our land regards the rights of all the people paramount to the rights of any individual, but our higher courts are rapidly undermining this fundamental law and regard the rights of private corporations paramount to the rights of the whole people."

"When a man buys land he owns it, don't he?"

"Yes; he has undisputed possession unless the general welfare demands the taking of the land. Then he must give it up. A nation acquires land either by conquest or by purchase. In either case all the people are equally interested. After acquiring the land, then the rules or laws are made to govern the distribution of the land among the people. At first these rules or laws are usually fair and just, but as the country fills up the land becomes valuable and the land speculator finds it profitable to have men selected to make or change these rules or laws in a way detrimental to the producer and profitable to the speculator. A nation or state makes rules or laws to govern its affairs just as a father makes rules or laws to govern his family affairs. If the rules or laws are just and wise there will follow prosperity and happiness. If they are top-sided and discriminate against one in favor of another, then there will follow misery and discontent for some and luxury and idleness for others."

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"Yes; he has undisputed possession unless the general welfare demands the taking of the land. Then he must give it up. A nation acquires land either by conquest or by purchase. In either case all the people are equally interested. After acquiring the land, then the rules or laws are made to govern the distribution of the land among the people. At first these rules or laws are usually fair and just, but as the country fills up the land becomes valuable and the land speculator finds it profitable to have men selected to make or change these rules or laws in a way detrimental to the producer and profitable to the speculator. A nation or state makes rules or laws to govern its affairs just as a father makes rules or laws to govern his family affairs. If the rules or laws are just and wise there will follow prosperity and happiness. If they are top-sided and discriminate against one in favor of another, then there will follow misery and discontent for some and luxury and idleness for others."

(Continued next week.)

his title and sell it to someone who is willing to pay the tribute."

Farmer Brown shook his head as he muttered: "That's so; the tax-collector do sell a feller's land when he don't pay the tax on it. I had mine advertised last year, but I choked it off by borrowin' the money and payin' the taxes and the costs."

"As a further proof that the people still hold primary title to the land is the fact that when it is considered for the public good any land can be condemned for public use," continued the speaker. "Your county court can condemn a roadway through any land in your county, and no matter how much the man in possession of the land may complain, the road will go through if the public welfare demands it. It is because a railway is considered a public carrier and a public highway that it can condemn your land and even your buildings for its right of way. The fundamental law of our land regards the rights of all the people paramount to the rights of any individual, but our higher courts are rapidly undermining this fundamental law and regard the rights of private corporations paramount to the rights of the whole people."

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